



DATE: February 21, 2024

TO: Chair Atterbeary and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee

FROM: ZeroEyes

SUBJECT: Support House Bill 1167, Maryland Center for School Safety – Statewide Secure Schools Emergency Response Program – Established

Thank you, Chair Atterbeary, and committee members, for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Bill 1167. I'd like to also thank the sponsor, Delegate Foley. On behalf of the ZeroEyes team, thank you for spearheading this issue.

My name is Mia Link, and I am the Vice President of Strategy for ZeroEyes. ZeroEyes was founded in 2018 by military veterans with the mission of improving public safety by providing proactive firearm detection in schools, commercial buildings, and government infrastructure.

Five years ago, ZeroEyes was spurred into action following the events at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Florida, when a former student brought a gun into the school, killing 17 and wounding an additional 17 people. Our team has grown out of the military special operations community and is now close to 200 employees, 80% of whom are military and law enforcement veterans.

Our technology uses artificial intelligence software implemented on already existing security camera infrastructure to detect visible firearms and alert law enforcement within seconds. Again, these are existing cameras that are then integrated with AI technology. Our software does not perform any sort of facial recognition, behavioral characterization, or predictive analytics and is compliant with all privacy standards and frameworks.

When a viable threat is detected, alerts are sent through the app and via phone to all parties involved, including the school administrators, police, and anyone else on the "alert" list.

In the last five years, we have experienced rapid growth. **Our software is deployed into hundreds of K-12 districts across 35 states.** Our service is also used and implemented within large enterprise organizations such as the Department of Defense, the Veterans Administration, Meijer, Verizon, FedEx, DHL, Subaru, and Home Depot among many others.

The lack of budget is the single greatest obstacle for schools to implement this technology. **With this bill, Maryland could join other states that are prioritizing school safety by taking the initiative to fund and add a proactive, technological solution to the growing problem of gun violence in schools.** We believe that this is the future direction – not just for school safety, but also for other areas such as hospitals, shopping centers, and so much more.

We look forward to the opportunity to partner with the State of Maryland and the Maryland Center for School Safety on a pilot program should this legislation be enacted. We would also like to offer a demonstration of our technology, should your committee be interested.